

**APPROVED
REGULAR MEETING
October 3, 2016**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on October 3, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

Present: Councilors Bello, Hemmann, Hurley, Latina, Martino, Rell, Spinella, Deputy Mayor Barry and Mayor Montinieri.

Also present: Derrick Gregor, Town Engineer; Fred Bushey, School Facilities; James Cetran, Chief of Police; Jeff Bridges, Town Manager and Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk.

All stood for the pledge of allegiance to the flag which was led by Councilor Rell.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tom Mazzarella of 600 Wolcott Hill Road commented that he was caught by surprise to read in the newspaper an article "State Aid Sought for Apartment Building". He was wondering if it was Paul Montinieri as a private individual is working on this development project or is it Mayor Montinieri. What authority does the Mayor have and perhaps unintentionally overstepped his authority. This is not to say that Council's hard work and countless hours of volunteering are not appreciated and he knows it is a thankless job they have. This has become way too political and needs to stop. Running of the town needs to be open and transparent and not about who accomplished what.

Gus Colantonio of 16 Morrison Avenue stated the facts about Morrison Avenue and Hillcrest Avenue.

John Console of 38 Ivy Lane voiced his concerns about the paving of Ivy Lane, Drummer Lane, Round Hill Road and Crest Street with regard to the curbing, driveway aprons and drainage. He spoke about the issues with photos that he presented to Council. He stated that residents have come to accept mediocre results at best from any town fix that is done. It has become common place with this town and shame on it for not taking the time to come out and see how our taxpayer's money is being spent.

Robert Young of 20 Coppermill Road indicated he saw the same article and transparency is not superior here in this town as he had thought it was. Why do you want to bring in someone who is cash short/cash poor and needs loans and then putting in apartments is a very poor investment for us. Utilizing CRDA will be even more non-transparency. Their reputation is not good and for us to get involved with them is a poor choice. We currently have with the State of Connecticut 13 state employee taxpayer funded unions that are up for contracts and they are negotiated behind closed doors. These are the highest paid people in the State of Connecticut and being funded by the rest of us. These negotiations should be out in the open so we can see what happens in there. The I-91 and I-84 tunnel and the Dunkin Donuts stadium are all projects that money is being thrown out and has no bearing whatsoever. The State of Connecticut and the town just keep borrowing and more spending.

David Decarli of 7 Monticello Drive wanted to respond to the article on regionalization. As far back as March 2016 the media described the crisis in Hartford as a category 5 fiscal hurricane. This is not a new thing that Hartford has faced in large part due to all the tax exempt buildings and excessive spending. He hopes we teach our children to get a solid education, get a job, pay your bills on time, save for

emergencies in the future, keep a budget and live within your means. He looks to Wethersfield's leaders to protect Wethersfield's residents.

George Ruhe of 956 Cloverdale Circle wanted to know what the status of the pond was. The concern was that the turf was supposed to be much safer and he kept hearing, he believed, about concussions and that is a national issue. We should think about it when deciding and make sure that we spend effectively. He made suggestions with regard to voting. He suggested they think through the process of regionalization because we have to live with our neighbors and not build walls. Some time back he asked about the traffic stop data analysis and wondering if he could find a hard copy of it to read. Sometimes you just have to put the stop sign up and solve the problem regardless of what they say.

HEARING - NONE

GENERAL COMMENTS

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Rell stated that the Historical District Commission had a hard time figuring out if they would have a quorum at their last meeting and he wanted people to know that with any Committee or Commission public notices and agendas are set well in advance so if you are a member of any of these committees please note when they are and respond timely to let the administrators know if you are able or unable to attend because it seems like we are going back down to that cycle of lack of interest or lack of support for some of these meetings.

Councilor Martino commented that they had an OPED Trust meeting and the financial advisor came and talked about the status of money in that fund and at his request they are bringing on one more fund. We are splitting some money in the domestic equity account to bring in one more manager to get a good return on our investment. The advisor is doing very well for us. The Public Works Committee met. They have been working on the intersection improvements at Hartford Avenue, State Street and Nott Street which is on Town Engineer Gregor's presentation. They reviewed the parking lots that are going in at Wilkus Farms and it was agreed to combine two of them into one to save space and make it more efficient. They also reviewed the drainage projects on Bell Pond and Murphy Pond and are asking for more information which we should have at our next meeting so they can make a decision to bring those forward. We had a letter from the State offering to sell us property at 170 Ridge Road, the old School for the Blind, but the recommendation of the Committee was to vote no because we don't have a need for the facility and it would cost us money to clean up the hazardous material in there which we didn't want to undertake. They reviewed the turf on Cottone Field. The Town Engineer provided us with documents but we asked them to come back to us because of some articles in the newspaper about the pros and cons of the synthetic turf and we wanted those answers before we made our decision and to be prepared for any questions that came forward in a public session. They reviewed some changes for sidewalk safety at Leo's and D & D Market. They reviewed the letter from Mr. Console regarding Ivy Lane and the curbs and the Town Engineer was going back to look at that and was asked him to look at the policy and to come back to us with any recommendations or changes.

Deputy Mayor Barry attended the Building Committee meeting and the construction portion of the project is coming to an end and is on schedule. The pool will be done in time for the girls swim team to have their last meet. The project won't be done in October because of punch list items but certainly the major construction will be done. From a finance standpoint the project is within budget. There is

between contingency and allowances, as of the last meeting, a \$398,000 still remaining. The other item that was discussed was the roof top screening the air handling units. A few neighbors came in to speak about the need to screen especially from the Wolcott Hill side. There is a subcommittee dealing with that and that will need to be done after October, probably in the spring or summer. There will be discussion about how their schedule precedes moving forward dealing with the punch list.

Councilor Bello attended the Library Board meeting and Director Berry discussed upcoming programming and the success of the summer programs. The Friends of the Library next book sale is November 5th and 6th.

Councilor Latina stated that she was unable to attend the meeting but did review the minutes of the Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities. They are talking about a crosswalk button issue near Lasher and Court and Mill Street. They are going to contact Central Office and the traffic folks to take a look at that. An upcoming social event is a Thanksgiving Dinner on November 19. They have transportation contact information for anyone who is interested in ADA paratransit.

Councilor Hurley reported on the Recreation Board. The Keane Foundation has added after school programs and they are a big success. All the programs are full to capacity and they may be looking at even adding some extra capacity to them. There was an informational meeting regarding a Community Theater program for adults. Anyone interested in getting involved should contact him and he would point them in the right direction.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Spinella commented that Ivy Lane and Round Hill Road just doesn't look right. He lives on Round Hill Road and it goes from a very high curb to a very low curb in lots of different areas. He didn't know what the purpose of the curb was and found out that the curb is to control the water flow which it doesn't look like it is going to work and thinks it should be looked into it. With respect to somebody who is in a different caucus and that would be somebody under the orifices of the Board of Education and that would be the Principal of Highcrest School, John Bean, who has recently been arrested. He makes this comment because the nature of his employment and the concern he has seen from citizens of Wethersfield. The allegations against him are very, very concerning to everyone given the fact he deals with kids every single day. He knows Chief Cetran is doing a full scale investigation and he encourages the Board of Education to follow up on that and make sure and assure the people of Wethersfield that this guy never steps foot in another school again. He has seen first-hand what people who have this problem can do, as a prosecutor, and it is something that can never be rectified with children. Don't take the chance. Get this guy out of here.

Councilor Hurley commented that on September 25th Councilor Hemmann and he had the pleasure of helping take out 1.4 tons of garbage out of and around the Cove. There were tires, barrels and lots of little pieces of trash. Last year was 1.6 tons so this year it is starting to go down but there is still a lot of garbage out there if anybody wants to participate. It is every year and they give you all the tools you need. You go down there. You clean up and you feel good and it was a nice day. He agrees with the comments made by the gentleman that made comments on the Fun Zone grant and the gentleman that made the comments on the regionalization.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Bridges turned the podium over to Town Engineer Derrick Gregor to discuss the sidewalk improvements that they have been looking at with Public Works which they hope to get those done this season.

Town Engineer Gregor stated the intersection of State Street, Hartford Avenue and Nott Street. The town recently received a complaint from a resident about how unsafe it was to cross this section particularly when the Farmer's Market is going on. There are crosswalks leading from Standish Park across Hartford Avenue and across Nott Street which is quite a long pedestrian crossing. Vehicles coming through the intersection are a free flow access from State Street onto Hartford Avenue and they drive at high rates of speed and can be very dangerous to cross. Initially The Police Department placed No Parking signs on the North side of State Street to help with site line issues. Pedestrian crossing signs were also placed on either side, one on the island and one at the park. The proposed plan is some traffic calming measures with minor improvements which should address traffic speeds and improving pedestrian safety. We are proposing to widening the island ten feet to the North into State Street and approximately five to ten feet to the West along Hartford Avenue, basically making the road physically narrower as well as installing a six foot wide reinforced concrete sidewalk across the island. This will provide pedestrian refuge as they continue to cross from Nott and State Street where you can be off the road and be seen by the traffic. There would also be standard four inch white shoulder lines along the North side of State Street which narrows the road width so that should slow traffic down. It would reduce the current seventy foot crossing from the island to the park down to thirty feet. The shoulder lines along the north side of State Street would also be a way of discouraging parallel parking. New crosswalks will be added at North side of Hartford Avenue and Nott Streets. The work is planned to be done with our sidewalk contractor and in combination with the line striping contractor who will be here to do their annual striping. A resident also brought up if there is a need for a stop sign at the end of Nott Street instead of a yield sign. One thought was building improvements this fall and reevaluate next year to see if there is a need to do more of an assessment for a stop sign in that area. The Beautification Committee is aware of the project and they are in support of it.

Councilor Hurley inquired if it was reviewed with the Police Department.

Mr. Gregor indicated yes but he was waiting confirmation on the white shoulder line striping on the north side of the road which extends further east than where the no parking signs are currently and if they are comfortable extending it that far.

Councilor Latina commented that the folks on the Disability Committee were very happy that he had reached out to them and they will be sending him some information on what their thoughts were.

Mr. Gregor stated that he had spoken with the staff liaison and is scheduled to meet with them on October 19 to introduce himself and have some discussions about where their priorities are in town and see how we can work those into our sidewalk program for this year.

Town Engineer Gregor stated that the second safety improvement project is on Wolcott Hill Road in the vicinity of D & D Market, Leo's Pizza and some other commercial properties. Currently it is fairly dangerous for both vehicles and pedestrians. A form of these improvements was submitted last year to CROG for a Local Road Accident Reduction Grant but because it was a minimal cost it did not qualify for that program. There are 17 parking spaces that are off the road with one stop sign at Dale Road as you

head south. People tend to drive fast through the area and don't seem to want to yield to people trying to get in or out of the parking spaces. The road width is 20 foot in each direction. On the corner of Beverly Road and Wolcott Hill Road is an existing sidewalk ramp that directs people out into the middle of the intersection with no receiving on the other side. The proposed plan is to implement some traffic calming measures. In front of the commercial properties is to shift the center line away to the east from the existing parking spaces and looking at adding white shoulder lane lines between Marmor Court and Coleman Road to narrow the road width to 12 feet to help slow traffic down and particularly in front of the commercial properties better defining and moving the lane of traffic as far away from the parking spaces we can so as vehicles are backing out they have more sight line and ability to get out and for traffic to better see them and accommodate letting them into the road. It will still be free flow going in the northbound direction. From the pedestrian perspective we are looking to removing the existing sidewalk ramp that is on the corner of Beverly and installing a new crossing on the north corner of Clearfield Road and Wolcott Hill. We would also be adding fluorescent pedestrian crossing signs along with the striping across the road should help to slow down traffic. The businesses there are very supportive of the proposal and in favor of any improvements.

Councilor Hurley indicated that there was an unfortunate accident there a year ago where somebody was killed. Last year when we talked about doing some of these things, the crosswalk idea was called like "a false sense of security" that it could cause more harm than good. People out in the middle of the road where people are travelling like that and was wondering what has changed since then.

Mr. Gregor indicated nothing has changed. This will be narrower and have new reflective signage and better street lighting conditions which will give better sight lines. We have a lot of situations throughout town where we have crosswalks that are not at a stopped controlled intersection. We sent this to Chief Cetran and got his approval and we have been in touch with some of the lieutenants that handle police and traffic control and they were okay with the improvements as shown.

Councilor Spinella asked how long the parking will be affected while this is under construction.

Mr. Gregor indicated there would only one or two spots to the south end that would be impacted while the bump out island is built but other than that he didn't believe the rest of the parking to be impacted.

Councilor Bello questioned that Mr. Gregor had indicated that he had contacted the business owners but was wondering if he had reached out to the homeowners to the east.

Mr. Gregor responded not yet and planned to but wanted to speak to Council first prior to doing that.

TOWN CLERK COMMUNICATION

Town Clerk Sassano reported that the absentee ballots will be available October 7th. As soon as we get applications, we mail out the ballots. People can start walking into the office and complete an application and actually complete the ballot. There is www.govote.ct.gov which will have a lot of information about voting on where you go to vote, if you are registered and all the changes. Presidential ballots have been issued previously, over 900 of them; this year we will have far fewer because the rules of use have changed. Only people who may apply for the presidential ballot are those who moved out of the State of Connecticut and not have enough time to register in their new state. Connecticut has same day voter registration. If you are not registered to vote by November 1st you will have to wait until November 8th to come in person. You will be able to register and vote the same day if

you meet the qualifications which are you have to be 18 years of age, a citizen and reside in Wethersfield. On Saturday, November 5th the Town Clerk will be issuing absentee ballots from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for people unable to be in Town on Election Day.

COUNCIL ACTION

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR ACTION - NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Deputy Mayor Barry motioned to **“MOVE \$6,092.64 FROM CAPITAL PROJECT #30391 SDMS AIR HANDLING UNIT TO CAPITAL PROJECT #30939 SCHOOL CAMERA SURVEILLANCE PROJECT”**, seconded by Councilor Martino.

Town Manager Bridges stated that earlier in the year the Council consolidated some of the remaining funds in capital projects for the Board of Education to fund the remainder the of camera project. Mr. Bushey was invited to the podium to explain the motion.

Director Bushey explained the revised quote that he was able to pair it down from the last meeting. He met with his IT department and the staff electrician. We are still in need of the NVR for the Silas Deane Middle School and the licensing for the bandwidth that needs to happen in that building. But instead of running the HDMI cables we can run a less expensive CAT 6 cable with a connector receiver to the back of the monitors to provide the same type situation and we have done this in the past and it has worked.

Councilor Martino compared the last quote with this quote and it has gone down by \$3,000. He noticed that the biggest part of it is the labor which shows the savings but on the old quote there is a requirement for a 32 inch flat screen with a monitor attachment for \$600 and that is not on the new quote.

Director Bushey replied that was already part of the project. The monitors are already there as part of the project and probably should not have been on the first quote.

Councilor Hemmann thought the original bid had a 3% contingency built into the \$196,500 price tag. She wondered if that contingency had been used and if it is going to be applied against this additional request so that it would reduce the request from \$6,092.64 by \$4,600.

Director Bushey replied no, it has not been used and yes the contingency could be used.

Councilor Hemmann stated that because it was already built into the budget so she suggested that happen because that is the purpose of the contingency for unexpected costs, correct, and these were unexpected from when the original specifications were assisted by Sonitrol to be developed.

Director Bushey responded correct.

Mayor Montinieri asked if that contingency has been kept to the side.

Director Bushey stated that contingency has been kept to the side and it has not been touched whatsoever.

Mayor Montinieri asked if there was any reason why they can't do that.

Director Bushey responded that at this point everything is ready to go now and they are putting together all the software and patching it into our network in two schools and have them up and running by the end of this week. His thought was to keep the contingency until the end to make sure we cover all our bases. These are the only things that are missing out of the project right now. Obviously the project could expand at a later time but at this time we could use the contingency.

Deputy Mayor Barry motioned to **"AMEND THE ORIGINAL MOTION TO REFLECT THAT THE CONTINGENCY WILL BE USED TO FUND, LEAVING \$1,492.64 TO MOVE FROM CAPITAL PROJECT #30391 SDMS AIR HANDLING UNIT TO CAPITAL PROJECT #30939 SCHOOL CAMERA SURVEILLANCE PROJECT"**, seconded by Councilor Spinella.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Spinella motioned to **"TRADE IN THE TWO VEHICLES FOR A TOTAL VALUE OF \$5,500.00"**, seconded by Councilor Bello.

Town Manager Bridges stated these will be traded in against a new vehicle they are seeking to purchase. The Council needs to authorize the disposal of the vehicles.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted. The motion passed 9-0-0.

BIDS

Councilor Martino motioned to **"AWARD THE ROCK SALT BID TO DRVN \$64.50 A TON AND EASTERN SALT \$64.00 A TON"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Town Manager Bridges stated that the bids came in lower than the current year pricing. We always select two vendors that way we can double our chances of getting deliveries considering we can't store due to the size of our shed that much salt.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION - NONE

MINUTES

Councilor Bello motioned **"TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2016,"** seconded by Councilor Spinella.

Councilor Martino stated that the date for the High School opening was October 24st not October 21th which Town Clerk Sassano corrected prior to the meeting.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-1 (Mayor Montinieri Abstained).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gus Colantonio of 16 Morrison Avenue commented that Goff Street between Nott Street and Wells Road has been reconstructed a couple of years ago. Wondering when the center line of the road will be painted. The crosswalk at the intersection of State Street is very long. Why not try to cross State Street at a 90 degree instead of an angle. Go across and then go right or left. If you are walking from Beverly Street towards Wolcott Hill Road and you want to go to D & D, are you really going to take a left to get to the crosswalk or are you just going to go across right there. The concern is to slow down the speed on that road. Silas Deane has a posted 35 mph and Wolcott Hill Road had a 40 mph and then went to 35 mph. Why not make it 30 mph now. Ivy Lane never had a water problem until this construction. Was the right computation done with regard to the drainage basins?

Tom Mazzarella of 600 Wolcott Hill Road commented at the D & D Market intersection, the stop sign helps a little bit but he thinks it gives pedestrians a false sense of security because very few people stop at that stop sign. Best case scenario they roll through it slowly. The proposed wide striped crosswalk at Brimfield is almost a death trap. You think because there is a pedestrian crosswalk there that you might have some sense of safety but that is not the case. The traffic is moving very fast there. After that fatality there was talk about putting a stop sign in the northbound direction but was deemed inappropriate and he would like that double checked. He thinks there needs to be something to slow the speed down in that area. Stop signs don't seem to do it. Maybe if the Police were to step up the enforcement of the southbound stop sign and do a little speed control there.

John Console of 38 Ivy Lane commented that a lot of discussions will be taking place on regionalization. He does believe in helping a neighbor but when neighbors keep making the same mistakes over and over again then you have to step back and ask what the issue is. The issue with Hartford is poor government, poor management, poor negotiations and the back office deals to help a select few people that were made. No matter how many dollars or what the towns do to try to have an infusion of funds into Hartford, if you keep those people in charge without a bipartisan check and balance and a government that will oversee every step they are doing, you will have an effect of just pouring money in and getting nothing back out of it.

David Caruk of 149 Broad Street commented that traffic is not slowing down on Wolcott Hill Road so now the Town Engineer wants additional markers to slow traffic down. Now Gus has been asking for a stop sign for a long time and was told he doesn't need one. He was at a meeting regarding the intersection of Marsh and Main Streets where we now have a stop sign on Main Street. All the traffic experts said we don't need a stop sign but the public said they wanted a four way stop sign. So you can't always go by what the traffic experts say. Sometimes you got to go by what the public says.

Robert Young of 20 Coppermill Road commented that he agrees that Gus should get a stop sign and make his neighborhood safe. We need to let Hartford sink and file bankruptcy and that would be a way of helping them. The 170 million dollar deficit for the State and how are they going to fund it. They want to take it out of the raining day fund. They are just blowing the money away on budgets that are unrealistic. Hartford went into contracts that they never could afford. Now they need help and Hartford doesn't come down here and help us out. They dug themselves in a hole. The best thing is for them to go into bankruptcy. Wethersfield needs better transparency, no more apartment complexes that will only load up our schools. We need viable businesses but not coffee shops.

George Ruhe of 956 Cloverdale Circle commented that something needs to be done about the microphones system so that people can hear everybody. He was wondering about the police cameras and the status of that.

Town Manager Bridges informed him that the requirements for storage, recall and processing of the data exceeds the capacity of the system at this time.

Jim Clynnch of 903 Ridge Road stated that he owns property on 105 Marsh Street and he asked the Town Manager for a Beware of Driveway sign and they sent him to the Police Department and they okayed it. One day somebody is going to get hurt seriously on that corner and you refuse to put a sign up there.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:52 p.m., Councilor Bello motioned "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**" seconded by Councilor Spinella.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk

APPROVED BY VOTE OF COUNCIL (9-0-0)
October 17, 2016